

table will be the greatest gift they can give this holiday season.

In Cleveland, one of the food distribution centers is Cooley Avenue Church of God. There, Pastor Richard Bolls hands out food to an elderly man, Norm. Of the food bank, Norm says:

At the end of the month I have just \$19 left after paying for my rent, my utilities, and my medicine. Normally I wouldn't get fruit and vegetables to eat. I consider this my ice cream.

It was 28 degrees and windy in Cleveland on Tuesday, colder today. At 11 o'clock in the morning, Christian, a native of the Mount Pleasant area of Cleveland, and her newborn stood in line for food at the Cleveland Food Bank, recognized as the No. 1 food bank in the country recently. Christian is a trained nurse's assistant. She has been searching for a job for 6 months since she had her baby, without luck. She notices the price of food she buys at the supermarket seems to rise every day, with the cost of caring for a newborn and the rise in food and fuel prices—heating and gasoline—Christian stood in line at the food bank Tuesday because she cannot afford to feed her family without some additional help.

Christian and Norm have heart-breaking stories, but their stories are not unique. More Americans are lining up at food banks this year. Most are working Ohioans and working people. Many are middle-class Americans, teetering on the edge. Additional funding for the emergency food stamp program is the most immediate Federal solution to the national food crisis.

This food bank crisis underscores the need to pass the farm bill. The farm bill is an agriculture bill, it is a hunger bill, it is an energy bill, it is a conservation bill. I applaud Chairman TOM HARKIN, the Senator from Iowa, for his leadership on this bill. This farm bill helps family farmers in Ohio and across the country by strengthening the farm safety net. For the first time ever, farmers will be able to enroll in a program that ensures against revenue instability, which for many farmers means either a bad yield or low prices. But either can be devastating.

With the right resources and the right incentives, farmers can help decrease our dependence on foreign oil and produce clean, sustainable, renewable energy.

This bill, the farm bill which we hope to pass before we leave this month, increases food stamp benefits and indexes the benefits to inflation. When the purchasing power of food stamps erodes, so does our progress against hunger. Food stamps today amount to about \$1 per person per meal. A mother with two children gets about \$9 in food stamps. That is the extent of the benefit. This farm bill, bipartisanship agreed to, will increase that.

We are the wealthiest country in the world, a caring and compassionate people. Families in our country, especially families who work hard and play by the rules, should never, ever go hungry.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 390—DESIGNATING MARCH 11, 2008, AS NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTOR AND MORTICIAN RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. KOHL submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

S. RES. 390

Whereas the death of a family member, friend, or loved one is a devastating emotional event;

Whereas the memorialization and celebration of the decedent's life is the fabric of today's funeral service;

Whereas the family of the decedent has traditionally looked to funeral directors and morticians for consolation, strength, and guidance in the planning and implementation of a meaningful funeral ceremony;

Whereas funeral directors and morticians have dedicated their professional lives to serving the families of their communities in their times of need for generations with caring, compassion, and integrity;

Whereas these special men and women see their chosen profession as a higher calling, a sacred trust, in serving every family regardless of social standing, financial means, or time of day or day of the year, whenever a death occurs; and

Whereas on this special day, March 11, 2008, it would be appropriate to pay tribute to these funeral directors and morticians who, day in and day out, assist our Nation's families in their times of sadness and grief and help families mourn a death and celebrate a life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) takes this opportunity to pay the Nation's collective debt of gratitude for all the hours and all the times they have put someone ahead of themselves by serving the living while caring for the dead;

(2) urges every American of every walk of life to embrace each of these special individuals with heartfelt thanks for their dedication to their profession; and

(3) designates March 11, 2008, as "National Funeral Director and Mortician Recognition Day".

SENATE RESOLUTION 391—CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO ENGAGE IN AN OPEN DISCUSSION WITH THE LEADERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THE PLANNED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS AND THE EXPECTATION THAT SUCH ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES

Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. DODD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 391

Whereas the Republic of Georgia, which is an emerging democracy strategically located between Turkey and Russia, is an important political and geopolitical ally of the United States;

Whereas Georgia has made significant economic progress since 2000, with an economic growth rate that now exceeds 9 percent on an annual basis, and was named the top economic reformer in the world by the World Bank in 2006;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has been a leader in addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction under the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program;

Whereas the Government of Georgia is working to become a candidate for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union;

Whereas the United States Government strongly supports the territorial integrity of Georgia and works actively toward a peaceful settlement of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts that might lead those regions toward greater autonomy within a unified Georgia;

Whereas the popular uprising in Georgia in 2003, the Rose Revolution, led to the establishment of democracy in that country;

Whereas opposition parties in Georgia engaged in demonstrations lasting several days beginning on November 2, 2007;

Whereas the President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, declared a state of emergency on November 7, 2007, after which the country's main opposition television station, Imedi, was closed;

Whereas Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza visited Georgia on November 10-11, 2007, and urged the Government of Georgia to reopen its private television stations, stating on Georgian state television: "A cornerstone of democracy is that all TV stations should remain open.";

Whereas President Saakashvili ended emergency rule on November 17, 2007, and announced presidential elections to be held on January 5, 2008;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has announced the reopening of the major opposition television station, Imedi;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has invited international election monitors to oversee the elections and thereby contribute to greater international recognition of the Georgian political process; and

Whereas freedom of the press, freedom of political expression, and a fair and impartial judiciary are among the most fundamental tenets of democracy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the President should publicly state strong support for free and fair elections to be held in Georgia on January 5, 2008, in accordance with democratic principles; and

(2) the Government of Georgia, in order to restore faith in the democratic evolution of the country—

(A) must conduct free and fair elections, without government interference; and

(B) must permit all independent media to remain open and report on the elections.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I send a resolution to the desk concerning the upcoming elections in the Republic of Georgia.

I am pleased that Senators BIDEN and DODD have agreed to cosponsor this legislation. Our goal is to express our strong hopes that the Republic of Georgia will return to the democratic path and embrace a free and fair election process. The United States was founded on the principles of personal rights and liberties, and we must champion a respect for democracy and human rights. This must include U.S. efforts to expand initiatives that promote freedom of the press and freedom of the media worldwide, which I believe underpin a nation's ability to respect human rights and practice democratic governance.